

The Return of the Orange Tip

By ALBERT G. LONG*

(i) In Berwickshire VC 81

The Orange Tip, *Anthocharis cardamines* L., was a fairly well-known butterfly in the Eastern Scottish Borders about the time of the founding of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club in 1831. Thus, in 1832, the founder Dr. George Johnston described it as a local species, rare near Berwick but occurring on the road between Paxton and Swinton and also between Swinton Mill and Coldstream (*H.B.N.C.* 1, 8).

In 1850 it was seen at Coldingham Moor on June 19 (*H.B.N.C.* 3, 5), and in 1880 one was taken by Dr. Stuart at Broomdykes (*H.B.N.C.* 9, 295), while others were noted at Humebyres and Gordon Moss by Robert Renton (*H.B.N.C.* 9, 295).

About this time it was also known in Lauderdale, as recorded by Andrew Kelly in the book *Lauderdale and Lauderdale* by A. Thomson (1902), though apparently it was becoming scarce, as in 1897 William Shaw wrote "Once common at Gordon Moss but never seen now" (*H.B.N.C.* 16, 231).

George Bolam, writing in 1925, said that it occurred in the Eyemouth district many years prior to 1887 and also in Duns district, but he had no records for the twentieth century (*H.B.N.C.* 25, 522). The last recorded year of occurrence in Berwickshire therefore seems to have been 1880.

During the period 1945-1966, when I lived in Berwickshire, I never saw or heard of a single specimen in the County and I thus regarded it as probably extinct. In my County List (1957), I wrote "Is it too much to hope for its rediscovery or is it extinct in the County?" (*H.B.N.C.* 34, 132).

The first known recent occurrence of Orange Tips in Berwickshire, was on the North bank of Tweed below Leaderfoot Bridge on 18.5.1975., when about 10 specimens were seen by D. G. Long (*H.B.N.C.* 40, 104); and the following year, a male was seen on *Aubretia* in a garden at Earlston by Henry Polson (A. J. Smith, *J. Edinb. nat. Hist. Soc.* 1976, 12).

In 1978, one was seen at Abbey St. Bathans on 24.5.78, and another at Stichcill on the same date (A. G. Buckham). One was observed at Eccles on 24.5.78 by P. Summers, and on the North bank of Tweed below Lennel Churchyard I saw two males and two ova on *Alliaria petiolata* on 27.5.78. One female was also seen at the same site on 11.6.78. The above constitute all the records for VC 81 known to me.

(ii) In East Lothian VC 82

In East Lothian (VC 82) less seems to be known of the Orange Tip than in Berwickshire. W. Evans could only record two at Tynefield in May 1860 and 1861 (*Ann. Scot. Nat. Hist.* 1897, p.91). It would therefore be of interest if any reader has knowledge of records this century.

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(iii) In North Northumberland VC 68

The decline of the Orange Tip in Berwickshire towards the end of last century was matched by a similar decline in north Northumberland (VC 68).

Thus, in 1839, P. J. Selby recorded it on his estate at Twizell near Belford (*Ann. of Nat. Hist.* 3, 372); in 1843, Dr. Johnston observed it on May 3rd on the south bank of Tweed between Horncliffe and Norham (*H.B.N.C.* 2, 44); and in 1857, George Wailes noted it near Callaly on 4th June and added "Generally distributed over the two counties (i.e. Durham and Northumberland) (*T.T.N.F.C.* 3, 195).

In 1867 the butterfly was recorded at Lilburn Tower on 28.3.1867 (a very early date), and again on 10.6.1869 at the same place by R. F. Wheeler (*T.N.H.S.* 3, 28 and 478); and in 1872 it was stated to be scarce at Rothbury by R. F. Wheeler and R. E. Hooppell (*T.N.H.S.* 5, 99).

George Bolam, writing in 1925, recorded it for Hetton Hall near Belford. He wrote: "In W. B. Boyd's collection, in 1883, I saw a considerable series all taken at Hetton Hall, where as he informed me it used to be common" (*H.B.N.C.* 25, 522).

In the Phenological Report of the Royal Meteorological Society for 1929 the Orange Tip was recorded for Thornton (nr. Shoreswood), Berwick and for Lemmington nr. Alnwick. It is interesting to note that it was seen at Gargunnock, near Stirling (VC 85), on the early date of 27.3.1929.

Since the above we have no further records for VC 68 until 12.6.1976, when two males were seen by P. Summers on the old railway track. It is thus obvious that in north Northumberland, as in Berwickshire, the Orange Tip suffered a long period of eclipse.

(to be continued)

WARWICKSHIRE AND NORTHAMPTONSHIRE MIGRANTS.—There was a great deal of migrant activity in Warwickshire during October as the following m.v. light trap records show. 10th October: two *Rhodometra sacraria* L. at Charlecote, a ♂ and ♀. 13th October: *Cosymbia puppillaria* Hbn., at Alveston Village (New County Record). 14th October: *Leucania vitellina* Hbn., one each at Charlecote and Hampton Lucy; *R. sacraria*, two at Hampton Lucy, one at Thelsford (A. Gardner) and one at Charlecote; *Nycterosea obstipata* F., two at Charlecote. 25th October: *Leucania unipuncta* Haw. at Marton (R. Allen) (New County Record). 9th November: *L. unipuncta* ♀ at Charlecote (A. Gardner). 11th November: *L. unipuncta* ♀ at Charlecote.

On the night of 12th October 1978, two *Peridroma porphyrea* D. & S. and a good specimen of *Leucania unipuncta* Haw. were visitors to an m.v. trap situated in the grounds of the Primary School in Deanshanger Village. This appears to be the first Northamptonshire record for *unipuncta*.—D. C. G. BROWN, Jacksons Farmhouse, 25 Charlecote, near Warwick.